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USAGE MANUAL--LANGUAGE CURRICULUM I AND II, TEACHER VERSION.

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A MANUAL ON GRAMMAR USAGE WAS PREPARED FOR TEACHING IN SEVENTH- AND EIGHTH-GRADE LANGUAGE CURRICULUMS. THE MANUAL WAS FOR TEACHERS AND CONTAINS 96 GRAMMAR USAGE ITEMS WHICH COULD BE PROFITABLY TREATED IN SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADES. THE CONTENTS HAVE BEEN ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY WITH A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF CROSS-REFERENCES. THE MANUAL WAS BUILT ON STUDENT KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL GRAMMAR TO INTEGRATE IT WITH OTHER ASPECTS OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM. AN ACCOMPANYING MANUAL WAS PREPARED FOR STUDENT USE (ED 010 159). (MM)

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USAGE MANUAL

Language Curriculum I and II

Teacher Version

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USAGE MANUAL

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TO THE TEACHER

This manual is intended as a source of information about selected usages that students may have trouble with. It is not a comprehensive list but contains only those usage items that it seems most profitable to work on in the seventh and eighth grades. The list has been arranged alphabetically, with a certain amount of cross-referencing, so that (in theory at least) students can find information for themselves without troubling their teachers. It has been ring-punched so that it can be placed in students' notebooks.

You will notice that the manual builds on the students' knowledge of transformational grammar whenever it seems advantageous to do so. This is an obvious way of integrating the grammar with other aspects of the English curriculum. But we have also tried to discuss the various items on the list from the same point of view as that implicit in the grammar curriculum--describing rather than prescribing, trying to educate rather than indoctrinate. We have tried also to inform the discussions with the attitude encouraged by the rhetoric curriculum: that choices of usage (except in spelling) are rarely invariable but are governed by the writer's or speaker's purpose and audience and by the particular situation.

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations are shortened forms of verbs or phrases. Most abbreviations are not used in formal writing, but the following can be used at any time:

1. Parts of names or titles, such as
   Mr. and Mrs. Sidney J. Sneed
   Dr. Stewart McDougall, Jr.
   William P. Slade, M. D. (for Doctor of Medicine)
   Rev. George Dingle (for Reverend)

2. Expressions of time
   2:05 P. M. or p. m. (for after noon)
   625 B. C. (for Before Christ)
   1962 A. D. (for Anno Domini, used to mean years after Christ)

All abbreviations are punctuated with periods except when the initials of an organization are used as its name. For example

PTA (Parent-Teacher Associations)
NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)
UN (United Nations)
WAC (Women's Army corps)

ACCEPT - EXCEPT

Accept is always a verb meaning "to agree to" or "to receive willingly."
Examples: I accept your explanation. (agree to)
Everyone accepted me. (receive favorably)
Except is sometimes a verb meaning "to leave out."
Example: Present company was excepted. (left out)
Except is usually part of a phrase and means the same as but.
Example: Everyone except me likes it. (Everyone but me likes it.)
Everyone except Nan is going. (Everyone but Nan is going.)

ADJECTIVE

Adjectives are words which can be one kind of predicate in kernel sentences. That is, they can follow Be or linking verbs. They can usually be tested by putting them in front of the subject.

Examples: The house was purple. (The purple house. . .)
The sunset was beautiful. (The beautiful sunset. . .)
The man became tired. (The tired man. . .)
The cake tasted good. (The good cake. . .)
The assignment was difficult. (The difficult assignment. . .)

Most adjectives have three forms so that they can show comparisons.

Examples:			
	short	shorter	shortest
	good	better	best
	beautiful	more beautiful	most beautiful

ADVERB

Adverbs are words in a sentence which answer such questions as When? Where? How? Usually these elements are single words, but sometimes they can be phrases.

Adverbs that answer the question When? are called Time adverbs.
Examples: now, yesterday, soon, at first, in time, a year ago.
I will go now.
We took the test yesterday.
We will be back soon.

Adverbs that answer the question Where? are called Locative adverbs.
Examples: here, upstairs, on the porch, in the car, over there.
I have put the groceries here.
My cap is upstairs.
The dog is in the car.

Adverbs that answer the question How? are called Manner adverbs.
Examples: quickly, carelessly, correctly, with vigor, through his efforts.
Jerry ran the errand quickly.
The boy always does his work carelessly.
The team played with vigor.

Note: Manner adverbs are usually formed by adding ly to an adjective. (slow + ly = slowly; eager + ly = eagerly)
But some manner adverbs lack ly: hard, fast, etc.

Adverbs have special forms for making comparisons;

quickly	more quickly	most quickly
eagerly	more eagerly	most eagerly

Manner adverbs should not be used after linking verbs.
(For example, *Jack felt badly.)

In case of doubt, test the word by trying to put it in front of the subject. If it fits it is an adjective, not a Manner adverb.
Jerry became cautious. (Cautious Jerry. . .)
*Jerry became cautiously. (Cautiously Jerry. . .)

ADVICE - ADVISE

Advice is always a noun meaning "counsel, helpful information, or guidance."
Advise is always a verb meaning "to give counsel or guidance."
You can tell the difference between the two by the way they sound.
Advice has the s sound found in ice, price, mice, slice, dice, lice, twice, nice, and price.
Advise has the z sound found in rise, surmise, wise, revise, despise, surprise.
Perhaps these two sentences will help you keep the meanings and spellings straight.
He gave me advice for catching mice.
He advised me on catching flies.

AFFECT - EFFECT

Affect is always a verb which means "to do to" or "to influence."
Examples: This test will affect my grade. (do something to my grade)
Candy affects your teeth. (does something to your teeth)
Effect is sometimes a verb which means "to bring to pass or achieve."
Examples: He managed to effect a change in the government. (bring about)
Effect can also be a noun meaning "that which was brought about," "the result."
Examples: The effect was surprising. (the result)
The lecture had a good effect. (a good result)

AGREEMENT

Agreement refers to the fact that in Standard English sentences there are some situations in which certain words take particular forms because they ... "governed" or controlled certain other words. Some of the most common kinds of agreement are discussed here.

Number agreement between subject NP and Pr. This kind of agreement is found in sentences which have linking verbs or Be as the main verb.

The NP after the linking verb or a Be verb usually has the same number as the subject NP before these verbs.

Examples: The boy is my friend. not *The boy is my friends.
The boys are my friends. not *The boys are my friend.

(There are exceptions: The flies are a nuisance. or The best part of the show was the aerialists.)

Number agreement between subject and verb. There are only two situations in English where this kind of agreement might cause you trouble. They are:

1) When the tense following he, she, it or a singular noun is present tense, the verb or auxiliary it attaches to must have its singular form. This is the form in which s or es has been added to the root.

He runs. not * He run.
She cries. not * She cry.
The boy has stolen. not * The boy have stolen.

2) The verb Be has several singular forms and several plural forms. Some have present tense, some have past tense. The way in which you use them depends upon the subject NP. They are listed here:

Singular				Plural	
present		past		present	past
I am		I was		we are	we were
#you are		you were		you are	you were
he, she, it, any singular noun	is	he, she, it, any singular noun	was	they are	they were

So we say:

He is	not	*He are
They are	not	*They is
The cats are	not	*The cats is
The books were	not	*The books was

Number agreement with compound subjects.

1) When the subject is two singular nouns joined by and, the verb must be plural.
   John and Bill were here. (not was here)
   John and I were friends.
2) When the subject is two singular nouns joined by or, the the verb must be singular.
   John or Bill is coming. (not are coming)
3) When the subject is one singular noun and one plural noun joined by or, the verb will agree with the noun which comes second.
   The boys or the girl takes roll.
   but The girl or the boys take roll.

Pronoun agreement: Since pronouns take the place of nouns, we say that they must agree with the nouns they take the place of. For instance, they must have the same number. If a pronoun takes the place of a plural noun it must be plural. If it takes the place of a singular noun, it must be singular. The only time this causes trouble is when we are using the possessive forms of the pronouns (his, her, its, theirs). His, her, its are used when they take the place of a singular noun. Their is used when it takes the place of a plural noun.

The boys brought their telescopes.
The boy bought his telescope.
Everyone lost his shirt. (Everyone is usually considered singular.)

The singular pronouns (must also agree with the nouns they stand

---

#You is always followed by the plural form of the verb whether it refers to one person or more than one.

for in gender. That means that if the noun is feminine, the feminine form of the pronoun must be used.

The girl brought her hairdryer. (not *his hairdryer)

If the noun is inanimate or nonhuman, it (or its) is used to take its place. In such cases we say the gender is neuter.

The tree lost its leaves.

see GENDER

AIN'T

Ain't is a non-Standard contraction for am not, aren't, haven't, isn't, and hasn't.

ALMOST - MOST

Almost means "nearly" or "not quite."
Example: Almost all the water was gone. (Nearly all the water. . .)
Most means "the greatest amount." It should not be used in place of almost in Standard written English.
Examples: Most people like pizza. or Most of the water was gone. but not Most all of the water was gone. or Most everyone is here.

ALREADY - ALL READY

Already refers to time. It means "by now."
Examples: I have finished already. or He is already the richest man.
All ready refers to being ready.
Examples: We are all ready to go. or He is all ready and waiting.

ALL RIGHT

This is the preferred spelling for this term. Alright has not been accepted for use in Standard English.

ALTOGETHER - ALL TOGETHER

Altogether means wholly, entirely, completely.
Examples: That's altogether wrong. (entirely wrong)
They were altogether too noisy. (entirely too noisy)
All together means all of something together.
Examples: They went all together. (all of them together)
We sang songs all together. (All of us together)

AMONG - BETWEEN

Between is used ordinarily when only two items are being referred to.
Example: The umpire stood between the batter and the catcher.
Among is used ordinarily when more than two items are being referred to.
Example: The umpire stood among the five players.
This distinction is, however, breaking down. Sometimes we hear people say such things as "We divided the cake between the three of us."

AN - AND

An is one form of the determiner a. It is used before words that begin with a vowel sound.
a boy, but an apple; a horse, but an hour.
[Words like union and uke have a vowel as their first letter, but we say a (not an) union or uke because of the y sound that comes first when we pronounce them.]
In ordinary speech, the conjunction and is often shortened to the point of losing the final -d that would appear in careful pronunciation.
Bessie, make me some ham an' eggs.
I went into town an' bought some supplies.
Because both an and and are among the least stressed words in English speech, they sound alike in ordinary conversation, perhaps no more than n. But some difference between the two can probably be recognized in such a sequence as:
I want a banana and an apple and an orange.

ANTECEDENT

Noun phrases which are replaced by pronouns in a sentence are called antecedents. Each pronoun must agree in number and gender with the noun phrase it replaces.
Example: Henry and I were feeling sorry for ourselves.
(Henry and I are antecedents of ourselves)
Mary saw a dress, but she didn't buy it.
(Mary is the antecedent of she, and dress is the antecedent of it.)

see AGREEMENT

APOSTROPHE

A mark of punctuation (') used to indicate the following relationships:
1. possession - John's book, Keats's work, the horses' tails
cat's dish Max's cap boys' shoes
Jones's car Joneses' house

see POSSESSIVE CASE

2. contraction: can + not = can't do + not = don't
will + not = won't I + would = I'd
I + would + have = I'd've
he + will = he'll
it + is = it's (not to be confused with its which is possessive: The cat chased its tail.)
or omission: against => 'gainst never => ne'er
away => 'way even => e'en
about => 'bout ever => e'er

APPOSITIVE

A Noun Phrase meaning the same thing as another Noun Phrase that comes just before it in the sentence. It tends to make the meaning of the other Noun Phrase more specific.

Examples: My cousin Sarah. . . ("Sarah" means the same as "cousin" and tells which cousin you mean--not Mary or Pat but Sarah.)

Mr. Harrison, the principal of our school, is retiring soon. ("the principal of our school" refers to the same person as "Mr. Harrison" and helps to identify him)

ARTICLE

A subclass of DETERMINER. The most common types are:

1. The DEFINITE ARTICLE the which can occur with both singular and plural nouns.
2. The INDEFINITE ARTICLE a, which occurs with N + Sing, and some which occurs with N + Pl and N mass.

A has two forms: a before words beginning with a consonant (including the y sound in words like European, utopia, etc.); an before words beginning with a vowel. Silent h in honor and hour requires that these words take an.

see AN - AND

AS - LIKE

Formal writing demands the use of as in sentences introducing an embedded kernel.

Example: The children must do as they are told.

But like is coming to be accepted in educated speech, though still not in writing.

Example: We don't have winters like we used to.

Like, of course, is also used as a preposition, in which case it is followed immediately by a noun phrase.

Examples: People like them are irresponsible.
A car like yours is in the ditch.
We will use a flavoring like vanilla.

AUXILIARY

Part of every VP in English sentences. It is composed of an obligatory Aux_1 and an optional Aux_2: Aux_1 is made up of Tns and (Modal), Aux_2 is made up of (have + en) and (be + ing). As the parentheses indicate, the only part of auxiliary that must be included is tense. If optional parts of the auxiliary are present, they must be arranged in this order:

Tns (M) (have + en) (be + ing)

The following sentence has all four parts of the auxiliary: He should have been taking medicine.

BESIDE - BESIDES

Beside is usually the first word of a Locative phrase that answers the question Where.

Examples: He put his books beside the table leg.
They picnicked beside the stream.
The girl stayed beside her mother.

Besides means "in addition to".

Examples: She ate five muffins besides the three rolls.
She cleaned the house and studied her lessons besides working nights.
Besides, she wasn't getting paid for it. (in addition to that)

BRAKE - BREAK

Usually brake is a noun (a stopping device) and break is a verb (to crack open, split apart). However,
brake can be used as a verb:

He doesn't know how to brake a car. (how to apply the brake)
Brake easy, now, (apply the brake gently)

And break can be a noun,

They fixed the break in the line.
He got a break when his boss went on vacation.

Only two other words have the ea spelling which is like the vowel sound in date: great (vs. grate)
steak (vs. stake)

BRUNG

In Standard English the lexical verb bring changes with auxiliaries as follows:

1. past + bring -> brought. (I brought some soda.)
2. en + bring -> brought. (I have brought my sleeping bag.)

Brung is a non-Standard form of bring in both examples.

BUST for BURST

Bust in the sense of burst or break (The water main busted underground . . .. They busted the door down. . .), is considered non-Standard. The forms of burst are

past + burst -> burst	The bubble burst in his face.
en + burst -> burst	The waters have burst through the dikes.
ing + burst -> bursting	The balloons were bursting.

CAPITAL - CAPITOL

Capitol refers only to the building in which the state or federal legislature meets.
Capital is an adjective - shown by the -al suffix (as in national, federal, normal). When used as a noun, it is usually a result of dropping the noun it modified.

A capital letter - a capital (G as in George)
A capital city - a capital (Tallahassee, Florida)
The dome of the Capitol was designed by Jefferson.
The streets of the capital were designed by Jefferson.

CAPITALIZATION

"Capitalize" means putting the first letter of a word in upper case type, as Doris.

The following are usually capitalized:

1. Names of countries, and adjectives deriving from those names - England - English China - Chinese
2. Names of religions - Buddhism, Methodism, etc.
3. Titles - Captain John Smith, Vice-President Boulle, Prince Hamlet, Uncle Toby, etc., but not in "He is a captain."
4. Names of organizations - John Birch Society, Ku Klux Klan, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Boy Scouts.
5. The first person singular pronoun - I (but not he, we, it, etc.)
6. The first word of a sentence - "Look at me! The wind is carrying me away!" "When do you go there?" "Often."
7. Names of specific courses and languages, but not other subjects - I took English III last year. . .
   He failed Geometry I three times. . .
   He says he likes geometry. . .
   He says he likes Spanish because. . .
8. Names of brands but not products - Ford truck, Del Monte pineapple chunks, Campbell's pork and beans, GE bulbs
9. Names of individuals - Warren Harding, U Thant, Gargantua, Roger Maris, etc.

CASE

Case is a special form sometimes taken by a noun or pronoun that helps to show what the noun or pronoun is doing in a sentence. In some languages nouns and pronouns have many case forms, and a thousand years ago English had many also. But in English today there are very few, and most of them are found in pronouns.

Case in nouns

Nouns have only one case form which differs from the regular form of the noun. This is the form which nouns take when they show possession, and it is called the Possessive case. It is formed by adding 's or just ' to the regular form of the nouns. For example:

the dog's tail
the children's ball
the boys' exams.

(Note: When the regular form of the noun ends in s, as in the plural noun boys, we usually add only the ' , which is called an apostrophe.)

In your study of grammar you will learn that a possessive noun comes from a sentence with the verb have. For example "The dog's tail" comes from a sentence "The dog has a tail."

Case in pronouns

Pronouns in English still have a special case forms, and these are important for you to know.

When a pronoun is a subject NP it takes its Nominative case form. For example we say

I am going to the dance.
He will go out for football.

I and he are in the Nominative case.

But when a pronoun is an object NP it takes its Objective case form. We say

The teacher helped me.
Jerry saw him.

Me and him are in the Objective case.

These pronouns also have special forms for the Possessive case.

I have finished my work.
He kicked his dog.

My and his are in the Possessive case.

The relative word who also has special case forms. It can be who, whom, or whose, depending on what it does in the sentence.

For more complete discussions of these forms, see POSSESSIVE CASE, and PRONOUN.

CLOTHS - CLOTHES

Cloths means pieces of material. Clothes means the garments people wear. Clothes may also be the present tense singular form of a Vtr meaning to put clothes on.

Examples: We brought cloths to wash the windows.
Jerry put on his clothes. or Her clothes are stylish. (NP)
Mrs. Babcock clothes her children in rags. (Vtr)

Cloths: Clothes could be seen as parallel to baths: bathes, and breath: breathes, if it were not for the fact that clothes is a noun as well as a verb. However, the parallel is useful for pointing out the important difference: the contrast in vowel sounds- cloth is to clothe as breath is to breathe. The final -e affects the vowel in the same way as in these pairs:

mad - made	hop - hope
rat - rate	rid - ride
rod - rode	spit - spite
mop - mope	kit - kite

COLON

A mark of punctuation (:) used after a statement to indicate that a list will follow. For example:

He wanted three wishes: (1) to. . .
These are the promises she made: . . .

It is also used after the salutation in a formal business letter, as in Dear Sir: or Gentlemen: It is used to mark hours and minutes (8:43, 12:30, etc.) and chapter and verse in the Bible (Genesis 5:28-30)

COMMA

A mark of punctuation (,) used to separate the following elements in the sentence:

1. A series: . . .bread, butter, and eggs.
2. An APPOSITIVE: That man, my uncle, tried to . . .
3. After a SENTENCE MODIFIER: Accordingly, he put the plate. . . Of course, when they did the work. . ., In fact, we had hardly arrived. . .
4. For clarity: He went to the cupboard for the coffee mug he needed was there. (. . .cupboard, for. . .)
5. For separating two sentences joined by a conjunction: The driver honked, but the dog just lay there.
6. After yes and no answers: Yes, I have the tickets.

CONJUNCTION

A connecting word used to join elements which are of the same kind. Thus we can join two sentences, two Noun Phrases, two or more Verb Phrases, etc. The most common conjunctions are and, but, for, or, nor, yet, and so. They are sometimes called coordinating conjunctions.

Examples: I hit the ball and it broke the window.
(joining two sentences)
John and Mary won the game.
(joining two subject NP's)
The class elected Fred and Bill.
(joining two object NP's)
The boy climbed the hill and slid down.
(joining two Verb Phrases)

Of course it is possible to join more than two elements of the same kind. Sometimes students join several sentences with the conjunction and, producing a rather childish style. It is usually better to find some other way to connect the ideas. This can often be done by embedding some of the clauses in one of the others as subordinate elements.

Stringy: The teacher gave us an assignment, and I did the assignment and I was too tired to do it.

Better: I did the assignment the teacher gave us, although I was too tired to do it.

CONTRACTIONS

A shortened form of a word (forecastle - fo'c's'l) or words (he would - he'd) in which unstressed parts are omitted. In written form the omission is indicated by an apostrophe.

he does not - he doesn't	would have - would've
I have - I've	she will - she'll
it is - it's	do not - don't

COUNCIL - COUNSEL

council - the assembly (group of planners)
(The city council voted to remodel the courthouse.)
counsel - the plan or advice
(The architect's counsel was expensive.)
counsel can also be a verb meaning "to give advice."
(My advisor counseled me to take Latin.)

COURSE - COARSE

Course is a noun. Coarse is an adjective.
What courses are you taking this term? (school subjects)
The course he chose proved fatal. (plan of action)
Coarse means "that which is crude, rough, obscene," etc. (He was a coarse man. The cloth is coarse.)

DESERT - DESSERT

The difference in stress should keep these words apart:

desert	"a wasteland"
dessert	"end-of-meal cakes, fruits, nuts, etc."

Like many other nouns and their related verbs in English, desert (Noun) and desert (verb) show a difference in stress, with the verb forms having the heavy stress on the last syllable.

Examples:

convict (verb)	The jury will convict him.
convict (noun)	The convict returned to the city.
conflict	Your lessons conflict with my schedule.
conflict	The conflict raged on.
combine	The vegetables combine to make salad.
combine	The grain went through the combine.
permit	They will permit you to go.
permit	He has his permit to fish.
produce	This should produce more.
produce	The produce is sprayed frequently.

It is the verb desert "to abandon" (that is, "to leave empty, alone, waste") that is confused with the mealtime dessert because of the same stress pattern. However, the mealtime dessert is a rare spelling in English because of its -ss- representing a z sound.

DETERMINER

A part of the Noun Phrase which appears immediately before the noun in the kernel sentence and is given the symbol T. The class of determiner includes the following subclasses:

1) DEMONSTRATIVES: This that, these,those
2) ARTICLES: a. definite - the
   b. indefinite - a, an (plural some)

DIVED - DOVE

Dive + past --> {dived / dove} in Standard English.

Dove is more common than dived in some parts of the Northern states.

DONE for did

Standard English does not use done for did (He done it well).

do + past--> did in Standard English of all varieties (He did it well today)
do + en--> done in Standard English of all varieties:
He has always done it well.
He would have done it well.

DOUBLE NEGATIVE

The appearance of two negative elements in the VP is not grammatical in Standard English:

not	He didn't never go there.	but	He didn't ever go there.
	He didn't hardly touch it.	but	He hardly touched it.
	He never hurt nothing.	but	He never hurt anything.
	He won't scare nobody.	but	He'll scare nobody or He won't scare anybody.

An exception to this rule is found in such expressions as "It is not unlikely. . ." and "He was not unwilling. . ."

DROWNDED for drowned

In Standard English, drown + past--> drowned
drown + en--> drowned
Perhaps this non-Standard drownded, with its "double" past form, is made after the pattern of

sound: sounded	ground: grounded
hound: hounded	bound: bounded

Drown is of a class with frown: frowned
clown: clowned
down: downed
While swimming in the pool, he drowned. No one had ever drowned in that pool. He had been drowned in a lake.

EMIGRATE - IMMIGRATE

The difference in meaning is shown by the contrasting prefixes: e- (related to ex-) means "out", and im- (from in-) means "into." -migrate is from a root meaning "move" (as in migrant, migratory, etc.). The words are used as follows:
They emigrated from Holland two years before the disaster. (note: from)
They immigrated to the United States soon after. (note: to)
In referring to people leaving a region use the word emigrants.
In referring to people entering a region, use immigrants.

EXCLAMATION POINT

A mark of punctuation (1) indicating emphasis. Examples:
Ouch! That hurt. He did fail! I'm sure of it.
Mary! Open the door.

FEW/ FEWER LITTLE / LESS

Few / fewer / fewest occur with countable nouns; little / less / least occur with mass nouns.

many pencils (N_{cnt})	few pencils	fewer pencils	fewest pencils
much effort (N_m)	little effort	less effort	least effort
many sighs (N_{cnt})	few sighs	fewer sighs	fewest sighs
much waste (N_m)	little waste	less waste	least waste
many candies (N_{cnt})	few candies	fewer candies	fewest candies
a lot of candy (N_m)	little candy	less candy	least candy

I went there many times.
I went there few times.
I went there fewer times than anyone else.
I went there fewest times during 1968.

I spent a lot of time there.
I spent little time there.
I spent less time there than anyone else.
I spent least time there during 1968.

GENDER

Gender refers to the quality of nouns which makes us say they are masculine, feminine, or neuter. We can tell the gender of a noun by the pronoun we replace it with when it is singular. Feminine nouns are those that can be replaced in the singular by she or her. Masculine nouns are those which can be replaced in the singular by he or him. Neuter nouns are those which we replace in the singular with it.

Girl, woman, ship, lassie, actress are feminine nouns.
Sometimes we think of our pets as being masculine or feminine.
We might say "I gave my dog her dinner."
Boy, man, gentleman, knight, actor are masculine nouns.
Tree, rock, blood, sky are neuter nouns.

GOOD - WELL

Good is an adjective Pr and may follow either Be or Vlnk.
Examples: The plan is good. (Be + Pr)
The coffee smells good. (Vlnk + Pr)
By transformation, good can become a noun modifier (a good plan, or good coffee).
Well, on the other hand, is usually a manner adverb answering the question how.
Examples: The girl learned her part well. (Vtr + NP + Man)
Suzie performed well. (Vin + Man)
Well is also an adjective referring to health in such sentences as:
Her mother is not well. (Be + Pr)
The patient looks well. (Vlnk + Pr)

GOT

Standard English uses got as past + get when it means:
to obtain - He got the job.
to learn - He got his lesson.
to bring about - He got his son excused.

HEAR - HERE

These are homonyms for some speakers of English and are often misspelled. But the spelling of here links it with other words denoting "place" such as where and there, since each word contains the sequence -ere:

I used to live here. Where did I used to live?
We often went there. Where did we often go?

Hear is a verb and so should seldom overlap in its use with the adverbial here:

I can hear the music here.
Here it is. (from - "It is here;" here is a Loc from Pr)
Hear him out. (from "You will hear him out.")

HEIGHTH for HEIGHT

The Standard form is height. Because height belongs to the group width, breadth, and length, all of which end in -th, some speakers of English add the th. Heighth is non-Standard English.

HOMONYM

A homonym is a word that is pronounced like another word and sometimes is even spelled the same way, but it has a different meaning. English has a great many homonyms, and they often cause difficulties in spelling.

Examples:			
	bare	bear	
	pair	pare	pear
	sleight	slight	
	peace	piece	
	meat	meet	
	creek	creak	
	crop (of a bird)	crop (in a field)	crop (to cut short)

Many of the most troublesome homonyms have been included in this Usage Manual.
see BRAKE / BREAK, CAPITAL / CAPITOL, etc.

HYPHEN

A mark of punctuation (-) to indicate the division of words or combinations of words. It is used to divide

1. words that cannot be completed at the end of a line:
The boy stood on the burn-
ing deck.

Caution: divide only between syllables and do not divide if only one letter is left by itself.

2. words spelled out by syllables for spelling or pronunciation purposes:

at-ten-dance	mar-tyr-dom
gen-u-ine	bra-va-do
ig-no-ra-mus	su-per-flu-ous

The hyphen also combines such terms as the following:

forget-me-not (a flower)	ex-President Eisenhower
a devil-may-care attitude	thirty-two

IN - INTO

Both are prepositions found in phrases which answer the question Where? In usually is used when no motion is involved.

Terry is in the water.

Into, on the other hand, usually indicates motion.

Terry dived into the water.

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUN

A grammatical label applied to the words which replace NP's or part of NP's in question transformations. The interrogative pronouns are who, what, whose, which, (also whoever, whatever). Examples:

The boy was there.	Who was there?
The bird hit the window.	What hit the window?
The bird hit the windows.	What did the bird hit?
Mary has the big car.	Which car does Mary have?
He bought that house.	Which house did he buy?
His phone is ringing.	Whose phone is ringing?
I saw Mr. Glasgow.	Whom did you see? (also, especially in conversation, Who did you see?)

LAY - LIE

Lay and lie belong to a class of confusing verb pairs. One of each pair is a transitive verb which is followed by a NP, and the other is an intransitive verb which cannot be followed by a NP.

lie is Vin, meaning "to rest."

Examples: I lie down. I was lying down.

lay is a Vtr, meaning "to cause to rest," or "to place something someplace."

Examples: He lays his watch down. He was laying the book down

Some confusion between the two pairs arises because of the past forms of these verbs. The forms of the verb lie are:

pres + lie--> lie (The children lie on the floor.)
past + lie--> lay (Tje children lay on the floor.)
en + lie--> lain (The children have lain on the floor.)
ing + lie--> lying (The children are lying on the floor.)

The forms of the verb lay are:
pres + lay--> lay (Now they lay the paper on the table.)
past + lay--> laid (They laid the paper on the table.)
en + lay--> laid (They have laid the paper on the table.)
ing + lay--> laying (They are laying the paper on the table.)
Other pairs of verbs which are often confused in the same way are sit - set and rise - raise.
sit means "to rest" (Vin)
The old man sits in the chair.
set means "to cause to rest." (Vtr)
He sets the broom across the hall.
rise means "to go up" (Vin)
The balloon rises to the ceiling.
raise means "to cause to go up." (Vtr)
He raised his head.

LEAD - LED

Lead, the metal, and led, the -en (past participle) form of the verb lead, are homonyms.
The metal lead is spelled like several other similar-sounding words in English:
head dead stead bread tread
The change in the verb lead between present lead (I plan to lead him home.) and past led is paralleled by other verbs in English:

sleep	slept	keep	kept
creep	crept	bleed	bled
dream	dreamt	flee	fled
sweep	swept	breed	bred
feel	felt	plead	pled

LEARN for teach

In Standard English grammar, learn is one of a subclass of transitive verbs (Vtr) that is followed by inanimate nouns (Nin).
He learned his lesson well.
They never learned the rules in that way.
He learned the alphabet overnight.
Teach belongs to a subclass of transitive verbs that that are followed by to + an animate noun. Usually the to is deleted.
They taught him the rules. They taught the rules to him.
They taught him a lesson. They taught a lesson to him.

LEXICAL VERB

The form of a verb, sometimes called the root verb, which takes the -ing form. Thus we derive:

sewing	from	sew
taking	"	take
coming	"	come
sensing	"	sense
waltzing	"	waltz
cutting	"	cut

Notice that when a verb ends in a silent e, the e is dropped before adding a suffix starting with a vowel. come - coming
create - creator

LOOSE - LOSE

Loose, which is commonly confused with lose, can be a verb meaning "release, untie" and also an adjective meaning "not tight," "untied". Lose is a verb meaning "to misplace."

Examples: Did you lose your key? (misplace)
Loose the knot! (untie)
Bill has a loose tooth. (not tight)

-oose usually indicates the s sound

goose moose caboose
papoose hoose (gow)
(the exception here is choose)

-ose usually indicates the z sound

hose pose rose
nose close
(the exception here is dose, as in a dose of medicine)

MANNER ADVERB (Man)

An adverb which can occur with transitive and intransitive verbs and with a few linking verbs. It may be any of the following:

adjective + ly	(simply, clearly)
adjective + Ø	(hard, straight)
a phrase	(by machine, with care)
a clause	(however you desire)

Manner adverbs answer the question "In what manner?" They are therefore involved in the how transformations. That is, wh + Man ---> how.

They ran quickly. --> How did they run?

MODAL

An optional element in the verb auxiliary that helps to change the meaning of the verb. It appears immediately after tense in the verb string and is a part of Aux_1 in the Phrase Structure Rules. Its symbol is M.

VP--> Aux + Verb
Aux--> Aux_1 + (Aux_2)
Aux_1--> Tns (M)
M--> can, may, shall, will, must

Examples:
The bus will stop here. (NP + Tns + M + V_{in} + Loc)
The boy must have called. (NP + Tns + M + have + en + V_{in})

Four modals have both Present and Past forms:

Pres + M	Past + M
can	could
may	might
shall	should
will	would

Must has only a single form.

NOMINATIVE CASE

A term which is used ro refer to pronouns which in Standard English can appear only as subject NP's. The pronouns which are used only as subjects are I, he, she, we, they, and who.

see also CASE

NON-STANDARD ENGLISH

Non-Standard English is much more often heard than read. It is seldom seen in print, except when someone is trying to show how someone talks who normally uses this kind of English.

Non-Standard English is seldom used intentionally by educated people; for this reason, your teachers in school will try to get you in the habit of using Standard English regularly in all your written work and in your speaking whenever the language of educated people is called for--class recitations, for example, or panel discussions or conversations with your teachers or principal or counsellor.

It is really not fair to say that Non-Standard English is "ungrammatical" and should not be used for this reason. Actually, it is grammatical --or we wouldn't be able to understand it. It simply uses a kind of grammar that is different in some ways from that of Standard English. The trouble with it is that it marks the person who uses it as someone who doesn't know how to act among educated people. Using it when Standard English is called for is a little like shining your shoes with the guest towels in a friend's house or using an end of the tablecloth as a napkin.

Typical Non-Standard usages are such things as "ain't," "scairt" (for "scared"), "drug" (for "dragged"--He drug the cat along on a string), "he done it" (for "he did it"), "me and him" as subject Noun Phrase (Me an' him seen her a'ready), "seen" (for "saw"). What other Non-Standard usages can you think of?

You might want to look at Ring Lardner's short story "Haircut" (in POCKET BOOK OF SHORT STORIES, p. 165) for a good example of how Non-Standard English is sometimes used in fiction.

OBJECTIVE CASE

A term which is used to refer to pronouns which in Standard English appear only as object NP's. The pronouns which can be used only as objects are me, him, her, us, them, and whom.

You, it, which, and that may be used either as subjects or objects.

The distinction between who and whom is not always made in conversational English. That is, in speaking many educated people are likely to say "Who did she marry?" (instead of "Whom did she marry?"), or "No matter who you go with, come back early (instead of "whom you go with").

see also CASE

PEACE - PIECE

Homonyms which are quite different in meaning but similar in other respects.
Peace refers to the untroubled condition that exists between nations (the peace was unbroken) or within the mind of a person (peace of mind). Piece, on the other hand, refers to part of something (a piece of land, a piece of rope).

PERIOD

A mark of punctuation (.) indicating:

a. The end of a sentence; that is, an NP + VP:
   I decided to take the money.
   I decided to take the money, knowing you needed it.
   but not
   I decided to take the money. *Knowing you needed it.
b. Abbreviations:

Dr. Smith	St. Louis	Mrs. White
Ore.	U. S. A.	lb.
Jan.	Inc.	the Rev. Mr. Jackson

PLAIN - PLANE

Homonyms which are best distinguished by meaning:
Plain is an adjective meaning "uncomplicated," "clear," "easily understood," "homely," etc.

He made his offer plain to us. (clear)
Plain talk pleases me. (easily understood)
She has a plain face. (not pretty)

Plane is usually a noun meaning

1. A carpenter's tool
2. a flat surface
3. An airplane

Plain and plane are sometimes confused because of plains which refers to flat, prairie-like countryside.

Plane is a term generally associated with something technical: mathematics, aeronautics, carpentry, etc; whereas plain is usually associated with common things: plain clothes, plain folks, plain food, etc.

PLURAL

That NUMBER in English having to do with "more than one". We say nouns show number, depending on whether they refer to "one" or "more than one." If they refer to "more than one," they are PLURAL.

Rules for forming most English plurals are listed below:

1. N + plur is usually N + { s / es }
   Example: river (N + sing) → rivers (N + sing + s)
   box (N + sing) → boxes (N + sing + es)
   es is the plural ending for nouns ending with ch, sh, x, s, and z.
   bunches buses dishes
   quizzes axes
2. If the noun ends in y preceded by a consonant, to form the plural change y to i and add es.
   baby - babies lily - lilies mummy - mummies
   tributary - tributaries
3. If the noun ends in o preceded by a vowel, add s to form the plural.
   radio - radios schmoo - schmoos
4. If the noun ends in o preceded by a consonant, the plural form is less predictable. These endings are possible:
   1. add s - pianos, altos, sopranos, silos
   2. add es - potatoes, heroes
   3. add either s or es - buffalos or buffaloes, cargos or cargoes, mangos or mangoes, zeros or zeroes
5. If the noun ends in f or fe, these endings occur:
   a. add s: sheriffs roofs staffs
   b. change to ves: calf - calves self - selves
   leaf - leaves loaf - loaves elf - elves
   wife - wives wharf - wharves
   c. add s or change to ves: hoofs - hooves
   scarfs - scarves
6. Some nouns change spelling in the plural
   mouse - mice goose - geese
   woman - women child - children
7. Some nouns do not change at all
   fish deer
   salmon antelope
   politics sheep

POSSESSIVE CASE

The form a noun in English takes when it is indicating possession. The Possessive comes by transformation from a sentence containing

have, such as The man has a hat. When this construction is embedded into a consumer sentence, it becomes:

1. The hat that the man has. (adjective clause) and then
2. The hat the man has. (shortened clause) and
3. The man's hat. (single possessive noun)

The possessive form of singular nouns is usually N + 's (see APOSTROPHE). Some pronouns, however, have two forms which indicate possession.

I + 's -> my or mine
you + 's-> your or yours
we + 's -> our or ours
she + 's-> her or hers
they + 's-> their or theirs.

The first form of each is used with a noun; the second is used alone. (My book, but mine; your bicycle, but yours; their horse, but theirs.) Other pronouns have just one possessive form: he + 's -> his
it + 's -> its

Several words sound the same as some of the pronouns, but are different in writing:

their (they + 's) vs. there (a man stood there; there's a spot)
they're (contraction of they are: they're coming at six.)

your (you + 's) vs. you're (contraction of you are: you're a bad boy; you're not to do that.)

its (it + 's) vs. it's (contraction of it is: it's too bad; it's hot today.)

What is confusing is that these pronouns in the possessive case do not have an apostrophe even in their -s forms: hers, ours, yours, theirs, its.

PREFIX

Prefixes are combinations of letters that are often attached to the beginning of the root form of words (especially nouns and verbs) to make words with different meanings.

Exaamples:

Root Form	Prefix	New Word
form	re	reform
"	de	deform
"	in	inform
"	per	perform
"	trans	transform
"	con	conform
"	de	deform
"	per	perform

Some of the more common prefixes in English besides the ones above, are

anti (anticommunist)
auto (automatic, automobile)
im (impolite, impossible)
inter (international, interrupt)
mis (mistake, mishandle)
non (nonplayer, nonsense)
over (overactive, overage)
post (postwar, postseason)
un (unnecessary, unclean)

PREPOSITION

The introductory word in a prepositional phrase, which is a group of words made up of the preposition plus an NP. These phrases appear as adverbial elements, and occasionally as adjectives, in sentences.

The man stood at the crossroads (At the crossroads is a prepositional phrase acting as a locative adverb. The preposition is at.)

The teacher explained the lesson with care. (With care is a prepositional phrase acting as a manner adverb. With is the preposition.)

Some of the most common prepositions are: of, in, on, over, under, behind, with, without, into, by, up, down, around, between.

Sometimes several prepositions are used together as if they were one:

inside of the box
out of the frying pan

Some verbs have prepositions attached very closely to them so that we think of the preposition as part of the verb.

Examples: He glanced at the picture.
She flirted with the boys.
The policeman caught up with the fugitive.

PRONOUN

A special form of NP. There are several kinds of pronouns: personal pronouns, wh-pronouns, and indefinite pronouns. Personal pronouns and who have different forms for the nominative, objective, and possessive case.

Personal pronouns

nominative	objective	possessive
I	me	my, mine
you	you	your, yours
he	him	his
she	her	her, hers
we	us	our, ours
they	them	their, theirs
it	it	its

(Notice that you has the same form in both the objective and nominative cases.)

wh-pronouns

who	whom (objective)	whose
which	which	no possessive form
that	that	no possessive form

(Notice that which and that have the same form in both the nominative and objective cases.)

Indefinite pronouns

(every) one	(some) one	(any) one	(no) one
thing	thing	thing	thing
body	body	body	body

When one, thing, and body occur alone, only one is a pronoun ("She thought one must never point in public." but "The body was found in a ditch.") The indefinite pronouns have the same form for nominative and objective cases. They form their possessive in the same way nouns do--by adding 's.

PROPER NOUN

A kind of noun which is the given name of a particular member of a class. For example, Mary. Mary is a particular girl out of the class of girls. In the singular, proper nouns do not appear with a determiner.

George went home. but not: The George went home.
Iowa is next. but not: The Iowa is next.
(unless considered as a short form of the Iowa River.)

T + family name + plur is frequent: the Browns, the Johnsons, etc.

Proper nouns are capitalized.

QUESTION MARK

A mark of punctuation indicating either:

1. A question being asked
   How many helpings have you eaten?
   Is it my turn?
2. A bit of information that is not known for sure
   Ambrose Bierce died in 1914 (?) in Mexico.

QUITE - QUIET

Quite is a word which is used much like rather:

It was quite a large baby. It was quite large.
It was rather a large baby. It was rather large.

Quite is one syllable and is distinguished from quit by the final -e. They are in the same pattern as the following pairs of words:

sit - site bit - bite
spit - spite kit - kite

Quiet is a two-syllable word which rhymes with diet. It means "without noise," "silent."

QUOTATION MARKS

A mark of punctuation (") used to indicate an exact copying of someone's words:

When he came in with his "Hi y'all" most of us cringed.
All she said was "Oh!"

It is also used to set off titles of articles, essays, songs, short stories, and short poems:

The Reader's Digest article "The Face of a Man". . .
She entered the "I Speak of Democracy" essay contest.
Bob is singing "Stardust."
Read Poe's "The Black Cat."
We were asked to memorize "Fog" by Carl Sandburg.

REAL and REALLY

In Standard English real is an adjective:
This diamond is real, (not an imitation)
His real reason for going. . .(true)
His car is a real antique. (genuine)
and really is an adverb
This diamond is really expensive. (very)
He tried really hard.
In very informal conversation, real is often used in the sense of very:
He looked real fine. It was a real good game.

RELATIVE PRONOUN

The relative pronouns are who, which, and that. Who is used to replace a human noun (N_{hum}); or whom if it is an object NP, whose if it is possessive.
The boy who is my neighbor raises mice.
The boy whom I called came right over. (Though The boy I called. . . would be more usual).
A boy whose face I recognized waved to me.
Which (or whose in the possessive) is commonly used to replace non-human nouns.
The house which he bought is run down.
The house whose roof leaks belongs to Ned.
Both who, whom, and which (but not whose) can often be replaced by that.
The man who tells lies. . . --the man that tells lies. . .
The private whom they had demoted. . .-the private that they had demoted. . .
That can sometimes be left out of a relative clause.
The girl that he married. . . --the girl he married. . .
The money that he earned. . . --the money he earned. . .

RESPECTIVELY - RESPECTFULLY

Both words are adj + ly manner adverbs.
Respectively means "in that order"
Examples: Numbers 33, 35, and 40 were given to Philip, Fred, and Paul, respectively.
Respectfully means "courteously" or "in a manner showing respect."
Examples: The student replied respectfully to the visitor's questions.
Respectfully yours, (Closing phrase used in rather formal letters to superiors.)
Respectfully submitted, (Closing phrase for minutes of meetings.)

RISE - RAISE

See LAY - LIE

SEEN for saw

Seen, as in "I seen him do it," is non-Standard usage. In Standard English, Past + see -> saw, and en + see --> seen.
I saw him run better last time. (Past + see)
This is the second time I've seen him run. (have + en + see)

SINGULAR

That NUMBER in English having to do with "one." We say nouns show number, depending on whether they refer to "one" or "more than one." If they refer to "one" they are SINGULAR. If the subject NP of the sentence is singular + pres, it demands a singular form of the verb. Most English verbs have one singular form (the one ending in -s) that is used in the present with he, she, it, or any singular noun; but with the pronouns you and I, the form without -s is used: He runs fast. Bob runs every morning. You run too much. I run often.
See AGREEMENT and PLURAL

SIT - SET

See LAY - LIE

SNUCK for sneaked

The rule in Standard English is: Past + sneak-> sneaked.
Example: He sneaked past the door. not He snuck past the door.

SORTA for sort of KINDA for kind of

In Standard English sort of and kind of are used before nouns:
It was that kind of position.
She wanted that sort of yeast.
In informal speech sort of and kind of mean "to some extent," "rather":
The sky was kind of cloudy.
He was feeling sort of blue.
Since prepositions are not always clearly pronounced in speech, they tend to become attached to neighboring elements. In the development of our language this process has led to such things as:
be + ut becoming but
of + the + clock becoming o'clock
Kinda and sorta show this same kind of attachment, but they are still non-Standard English.

STANDARD ENGLISH

Standard English is the variety (or dialect) of English that is used by educated people. It is the kind that all of your textbooks are written in, the kind that you find in nearly all newspapers and magazines, the kind that government officials, businessmen, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and other educated people use most of the time. It is the kind of English that you are asked to learn in school so that you can come to use it comfortably and easily and naturally.

You should remember of course that Standard English is not the only kind of English there is, nor can we say that it is always better than other kinds of English for all possible purposes. There are times when you may not want to use strictly Standard English--a picnic with friends, for example, or a teenage dance--because if you did you might sound a little stuffy.

But it is very important that you learn Standard English so that you can use it easily and accurately when you need to. Most of the business of our country is carried on by means of Standard English. When you have finished your education and taken your place in the adult world, you will help in your own way to carry on our country's business, and in doing so you will usually need to use Standard English.

see NON-STANDARD ENGLISH; see also the Language Curriculum unit called Varieties of English, which you may already have read.

STATIONARY - STATIONERY

Homonyms which have little other than sound in common.
Stationary is an adjective which means "not moving" or "fixed in place."

The trailers were stationary, since their wheels had been removed.
The North Star appears to us to be stationary.

Stationery actually comes from stationer - one who keeps a shop instead of selling his goods by traveling from place to place. It is a noun and means "writing paper."

Her stationery was decorated with flowers.

SUFFIX

An element added to the end of a word to modify its meaning or to indicate a change in its function in a sentence. Common suffixes are ed, ing, tion, ence, es, able, ly.

The suffix ed changes the root of regular verbs to the past tense:

call - called
cry - cried
play - played

The suffix ing changes root verbs to the form used with auxiliary be:

sing - singing
write - writing
call - calling

Sometimes adding suffixes presents spelling problems. There are some rules which generally apply to the addition of suffixes. Though there are exceptions to these rules, they should be useful to students because they will apply most of the time. Such rules are discussed here:

1. When a suffix beginning with a vowel is added to words which end in a vowel and a consonant (stop, hit, mat, plan, etc.) the consonant is doubled before adding the prefix: (VC--> VCC)

   stop + ed--> stopped stop + ing--> stopping
   rot + ed--> rotted rot + ing--> rotting
   mat + ed--> matted mat + ing--> matting
   plan + ed--> planned plan + ing--> planning

2. When a suffix beginning with a vowel is added to a word which ends in e (make, ride, phone, write), the e is dropped before the suffix is added.

   make + ing--> making rose + y--> rosy
   ride + ing--> riding rope + ed--> roped
   phone + ing--> phoning write + ing--> writing

   (Exceptions: When adding ous or able to words which end in either ce or ge, the e is retained: courageous and traceable)

3. When adding a suffix which begins with a consonant (ly, ment) to words ending in e, the e is retained.

   sincere + ly--> sincerely
   close + ly--> closely
   refine + ment--> refinement

   (Exceptions: true + ly--> truly, whole + ly--> wholly)

4. When adding suffixes to words ending in a consonant plus a y (try, copy, apply),

   --if the suffix begins with i--the y is retained.

   try + ing--> trying
   apply + ing--> applying

   --but if the suffix does not begin with i--the y is changed to i.

   copy + ed--> copied
   try + ed--> tried
   foggy + er--> foggier
   sloppy + est--> sloppiest

SUPPOSE TO for supposed to

In non-Standard English, the d of supposed to is left off. How this happens is explained here. English includes combinations like the following:

I have to go. I used to go.

When these combinations are spoken, the final consonants of have and used (v and d) tend to be pronounced like the t in the to that follows: roughly, hafto, use to, etc. Supposed undergoes the same change in this phrase:

I'm supposed to go. --> I'm suppose to go.

SURE - SURELY

In Standard English, sure is an adjective meaning "secure," "confident," "positive."

Bill is sure of himself.
of the outcome.
of the facts.
of a raise.

Surely is an adverb meaning "firmly," "without fail," "securely," "certainly."

The doctor was surely a happy man.
Surely you don't want to be sick.

However, in informal speech, sure is often used as an adverb: I sure am. And sure enough he arrived.

THAN - THEN

Then is a Time adverbial: We will go home then (that is, "at that time."). The wh- question word based on then and other Time adverbials is when:

He went to school yesterday ==⇒ When did he go to school?
("at that time")
("then")

Than is a conjunction used to form the comparative:

He's better at that than I am.
Mary's prettier than Jane.
They were done sooner than we.
The Black drove harder than the Gold.

THERE - THEIR - THEY'RE

Because these three words sound alike, they are often confused in writing:

1. There--a Loc adverbial, as in "We often used to go there." The wh- question word which derives from there and other Loc adverbials is where.
   They go to the seashore summers. ==⇒ Where do they go summers?
   ("to what place")
   ("where")
2. They're--a contracted form of they are, similar to we're, from we are, you're from you are.
   In speech, even nouns can be contracted with are (as they more frequently are with is: the bottle's tilting): the rats're multiplying too fast. Since contracted forms always have their omitted elements indicated by an apostrophe, they're is distinct from there and their by at least this mark (compare they'll, we'd, I've, etc. --see APOSTROPHE)
3. Their -- from they + 's (parallel to our from we + 's, her from she + 's etc.) Although nouns mark the POSSESSIVE by an apostrophe, the pronouns do not--even in their so-called "second" forms: yours, hers, ours, theirs.
   They brought their books. or They brought theirs.
   Our school was too far. or Ours was too far.

THROWED for threw

In Standard English, the rule is Past + throw--> threw and
en + throw--> thrown.
Examples: The boy threw a stone. He had thrown many others.

TO - TOO - TWO

These are homonyms and are thus easily confused in writing.

1. to - a PREPOSITION which is also used as a mark of a verb form (to go, used to sell, etc.) and in certain adverbials to indicate direction -- to the store -- or manner -- to my satisfaction.
   To, like all prepositions, does not receive much stress in ordinary speech. Along with determiners and conjunctions, preposition tend to be the least clearly heard elements in speech.
2. too --An adverbial used with adverbs and adjectives to add the notion of quantity. (Too far, too quiet, too fast?)
   Too is also used in place of also. (He played the clarinet, too.
3. two--a word for the numeral 2. You can perhaps remember that this word is spelled with a w by thinking of related words in which the w is still pronounced.
   twice twain between twelve twenty

USE TO for used to

In non-Standard English, the d is left off: He use to like it.
See SUPPOSE TO

WEATHER - WHETHER

Whether is a member of wh-question words, as in the following pattern:

I wonder where he went.	I wonder what he did.
I wonder who went there.	I wonder why he went.
I wonder when he went	I wonder whether he went.

Weather is a noun referring to conditions of the atmosphere (temperature, rainfall, wind, etc.).

WHOSE - WHO'S

Who's is a contraction of who + is and must show the missing letter by the APOSTROPHE.
I wonder who's going? Who's going to bring the blanket?
Whose is the POSSESSIVE form of who. Although formed from who + 's, it does not use the apostrophe as do nouns in the possessive.

Whose car will we take?
I don't know whose it is.
The tree whose leaves fall early will not re-seed itself.
Who's and whose are exactly parrallel to it's and its.

WOULD OF

A common misspelling of the contraction would've (would + have).
Other contractions commonly misspelled are should've and could've.

YOUR - YOU'RE

See POSSESSIVE CASE